

Welch House Remains
Lot #5, South Ward
Town of Frederica, St. Simons Island
Glynn County, Georgia

HABS No.
GA 2151

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction
120 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

WELCH HOUSE REMAINS

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Street Address or Location: Lot #5, South Ward, Town of Frederica,
St. Simons Island, Glynn County, Georgia

Present Owner: Fort Frederica National Monument,
Box 367, St. Simons Island, Georgia

Brief Statement of
Significance: One of the largest houses built by the
original settlers of Fort Frederica;
dates from about 1739 and is in a ruinous
condition.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: This lot granted to John Welch, one of the first settlers at Frederica. (A List of the Early Settlers of Georgia, by E. Merton Coulter and Albert B. Saye, eds., University of Georgia Press, Athens, 1949, p. 56.) Paul Demere purchased the lot. On his death, Raymond Demere petitioned for it, being his brother.

2. Date of erection: About 1739

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure: Lot 5 was granted to John Welch, age 30. His family consisted of his wife, Ann, age 26, and two sons, James, 5, and John, 3. Mrs. Welch was very ill on the voyage to Georgia, but was safely brought to bed and her child was born just after they reached the Savannah River. Ann Welch was a very pretty woman, but she and Mrs. Hawkins were the ladies who made life miserable for the Wesley brothers. John Welch is listed as a carpenter, but Dr. Thomas Hawkins, writing to the Trustees in November, 1737, said that Welch had no manner of improvements either in buildings or cleared lands more than palmetto or clapboard huts. There is no mention of any house he may have built later. In February, 1739, James Oglethorpe advanced Welch 53 pounds, 11 shillings to set up a brew house. Paul Demere, an officer of Oglethorpe's Regiment, purchased John Welch's lot. On his death at the Fort Loudoun massacre, Captain Raymond Demere petitioned for the lot as the brother and heir at law of said deceased.

Sources: Allen D. Candler, ed., The Colonial Records of the State of Georgia, Atlanta, 1904. The Franklin Printing and Publishing Co., v. 22, p. 17; v. 8, p. 770.

Phillips Collection, University of Georgia Library,
Sup. 37s.

Margaret Davis Cate, Sea Island, Georgia, Town Lots at Frederica, Georgia, Typescript, copy at Fort Frederica National Monument, Box 367, St. Simons Island, Georgia.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Only foundations remain of this large rectangular house, which perhaps was used as a duplex. Duplication of artifacts on each side of center partition with double fireplace suggests duplex use.
2. Condition of fabric: Foundations only, nothing left above plowing depth. Much evidence house burned, perhaps in town fire about 1757.

B. Technical Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: 59'-8" x 22'-2"
2. Foundations: Poured tabby, 1'-1" to 1'-2" thick
3. Wall construction: Unknown
4. Chimneys: One, center stack of brick.
5. Openings: a. Doorways and doors: Two rear doorways from basement, wood frame.
b. Windows and shutters: No evidence except large quantity of melted window glass.

C. Technical Description of Interiors:

1. Floor plans: Number of stories unknown. Rectangular, with center masonry partition. Shallow depression in the floor 1-1/2" deep and 3'-6" wide extends across west end. Purpose unknown.
2. Stairways: Two exterior stairways at rear from grade to basement, of brick, with 2" x 10" wood treads retained by pockets in brick cheeks.
3. Flooring: Burned shell lime mortar with fine shell aggregate.
4. Hardware: Found in excavation: Partial front of andiron, "H" hinge shutter holdback, 2 fragments of box locks, large quantity of assorted nails, all of iron.
5. Heating: Double ("H") fireplace of brick in center of basement. Hearths destroyed.

- D. Site: Faces north. Situated in Town of Frederica, an old Indian field, flat, 40 acres. Lot #5, South Ward, 60' x 90', short north side fronting on Broad Street, 14' alley to back. Bordered on west by "Cross" St. and to east by 90' side of Lot #6, South.